

F R E E L A N C E P O L I C E

Series Bible
by
Steve Purcell

SAM & MAX

Freelance Police

We asked the Freelance Police if they had any advice for budding Crimefighters;

Max: It's like this, if the perp raises a fist-- you raise a sock full of lunchmeat. If he picks up a dagger-- you pick up a huge teakwood salad fork. If he uses a pistol-- you respond with a short range nuclear weapon. That's the Chicago way!

Sam: This is New York, Max.

Max: In that case, lead with the nuclear weapon.

Sam: In the words of my dear ol' Grandma, who electrocuted prisoners for a living, "Crime is an invitation to the crypt, little man--BZZZAAAKK!!" I always hated that.

Max: We never knew what the heck she was babbling about, but she made a mighty fine tapioca.

The Concept

A DOG AND RABBIT HAVE A HILARIOUS TIME WHILE CRACKING THE STRANGEST CRIMINAL CASES IN HISTORY.

Sam & Max will be a fast-paced, concentrated, loosely-structured comedy adventure show. Driven by Sam & Max's combined attitudes, the show will be edgy and irreverent with Sam & Max's pointed, or pointy-headed view of the world mixed with a thick dose of physical comedy and lots of funny stuff to look at.

Sam & Max see their world as their own personal theme park. A collection of weird characters, thrilling experiences and lots of stuff to mess with. They call themselves "Freelance Police" because it has a ring of authenticity and gives them an excuse to do anything they want, which, when you get to know these guys, is a frightening thought. They're playing at being cops, and as long as they believe it, so does the world.

A typical Sam & Maxish kind of day might find the boys hurtling to the scene of a crime in their clanking, smoking, highly flammable 1960 DeSoto Adventurer, Sam with his head out the window (revealing that there's a real dog in there somewhere), Max driving (even though he's not tall enough to see out the windshield), but never too rushed to stop off and fill up the car with a colorful array of popular junk foods. In fact, the actual case these guys are on is almost beside the point! Sam & Max truly enjoy each other's company and any time they can get out and mix it up with society is a great excuse for snappy banter and manic interactions with their surroundings.

Sam & Max are the stars of their world. They'll be surrounded by weird and wacky elements that make them seem to be the most sensible characters on the block. In Sam & Max, our experience is to see the world through their squinky little eyes. As we get used to their unique way of relating to things, they begin to make a lot of sense.

Sam & Max starts with a loose detective theme and takes every available opportunity to break out from that. The cop theme is our starting point and a great excuse to dump Sam & Max into any situation. These will be anything but standard crime fighting tales. The stories will lean toward the extraordinary side of life. In Sam & Max the strange will start to seem normal and the "normal" held up and observed so we can see how strange it really is. If something as ordinary as a jewel heist occurs in Sam & Max, it's because beings from another world need the diamonds to make phonograph needles to play the record we sent them on the Voyager probe.

We're speaking with the Freelance Police from the steel vault containing their historic "Legends of Crime" archives. The subject: Sam & Max on TV.

What's the show about?

Sam: It's about a couple of tough freelance cops who don't take any crap -- oops, I mean "guff" from anybody. It's about the timeless struggle between good, evil, and snacktime. It's not so much a story of talking animals fighting for justice as it is--

Max: Guff? I don't think that's a word, Sam.

Sam: Quiet, Max -- But it's also a show about friendship. The challenge of a bright, good looking dog, not unlike myself, to function in the presence of a squat, razor-toothed, lagamorph with absolutely no social skills. Only a true friend could tolerate that kind of constant, mindnumbing aggravation.

Max: Aww, cut it out, Sam. You're gonna' make me weep like a woman.

What are Freelance Police?

Max: The phrase just popped into our furry skulls!

Sam: Did you know anyone can walk into a store and buy an actual police badge? It really comes in handy when you want to enter the homes of people you don't know.

Max: That's right! Just yell, "Freelance Police!" like you mean it and nine out of ten average citizens will pretty much buy into the concept. I love that about people.

What will the network think about the fact that Max is naked?

Max: I like the word 'naked'. It's confrontational.

Sam: Shhhh. We're sticking to the story that he's wearing some kind of fluffy pajamas. Besides, what about Porky Pig? The look on that guy's face says to me it's no accident that he left his pants at home!

Who's the Commissioner?

Sam: We've never seen the guy but he sends an amazing amount of work our way. Come to think of it, he may be trying to get us killed.

Max: I disagree, Sam. I think to him, we're the troubled, ungrateful, sons he never had. Besides, I don't think you can say "killed" on a kid's show.

Sam: Oh, yeah, that's right. I meant "DESTROYED!"

Main Characters:

Sam -- Large, somewhat sincere dog

Sam wears a hat and a gray baggy suit because he takes his job seriously. He knows that when someone answers the door to a six foot talking dog, who also happens to be naked, it makes them dizzy and uncooperative. Believe him. He's tried it.

Sam is the motivating force of the Freelance Police. It's his slightly foggy sense of justice that gets things going. He's the one that's most charged up about being a cop. It was his idea to paint the DeSoto black and white. He loves dressing the part and talking tough. "You're taking the fall!" is the kind of thing Sam feels at home saying to a rat carrying a pilfered ice cream bar or an old lady in the supermarket who tries to smuggle one extra item through the express lane. The thing that keeps Sam from taking his "job" too seriously is having Max around.

As a dog, Sam retains many of his doglike qualities. He's excitable and enthusiastic, he loves going for a ride in the car, and is not above sticking his head out the window and letting his tongue flap in the breeze. Also very much like a dog, (and unlike Max) Sam can feel embarrassment and guilt. Of the two, he's the one who might say, "I feel kind of bad about this." It only takes a second, though, for Max to turn Sam around to his way of thinking with some spontaneous rationalization. Any feelings of remorse don't survive long in the presence of Max.



Sam carries around a lot of obscure information and never hesitates to share it. He actually knows the difference between a Yeti and a Sasquatch. He's more than willing to describe what would happen to all your body hair on the surface of Mercury. The likely inaccuracy of the information is completely unimportant. Sam wants to fill you in on what he knows even if it's being made up right as it comes out of his mouth. The more convoluted and detailed the information the more Sam likes the sound of it rolling off his tongue;

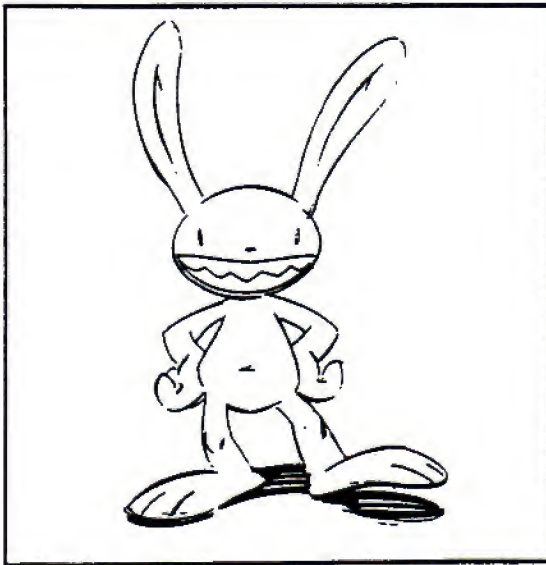
Sam: "Manatees live in the brackish waters of lagoons and river mouths, Max. They were the source of the ancient mermaid legends! Many a seafarer, in a drunken, nearsighted froth, often mistook the manatees for beautiful water nymphs and held great, (um)...affection for them. *whew* -- whole idea of it makes my skin crawl."

Sam sometimes sounds like an encyclopedia but always adds his own unique spin on the info. On more practical subjects, Sam is capable of total ignorance. If the DeSoto develops a boneshaking, metallic engine clatter, Sam will most likely deal with it by turning the radio up REAL LOUD.

MAX -- Short, manic lagamorph (look it up)

Max is best described as a hyperkinetic, 3-foot rabbity thing. He refuses to wear big, cartoony shorts to accommodate America's watchdogs of decency. He thinks that ridiculous garments would take away his streamlined, iconic visual appeal. When we say, "What about Mickey Mouse?" he pours his root beer onto us.

Max retains few of the characteristics of your average bunny. He sometimes calls attention to his own fluffy paws or lovable button nose but he's probably doing it to give us the creeps; since anything considered precious or cuddly is so obviously contrary to his real personality. His ears are in no way floppy; they stand in a permanent, excited posture and for the most part his face is locked in an unsettling wall to wall grin. Max's apparent goal in life is to be in your face.



For Max, the world exists only to provide him with input for his pinball-like stream of consciousness. He's uninhibited and unhinged. If someone points out that he's not wearing clothes he reacts with pride, "That's right, I'm Buck Naked! Texas Ranger!"

Max's reactions to danger show a seeming disregard for his own personal safety. In a highly charged situation Max might give the impression he's missing the point; Max: "Wake up Sam! The guy in the antler hat is going to do away with us! I'd hate for you to miss out on all this!"

Max's unflappable spirit makes him game for just about anything ("Go ahead! Try flapping me!"). If Sam ties a rope to Max's leg and chucks him

up over a balcony, Max feels lucky that he gets to go first. Sam has been known to occasionally snatch up Max by the legs and brandish him threateningly. Sam has even taken a swing at someone, using Max as a kind of a soft, plushy bludgeon. Hoisting Max, and working his legs in a scissor fashion has caused Max's beartrap-like teeth to act as an effective cable cutter;

Sam: "You didn't mind that too much, did you little pal?"

Max: "It was curiously refreshing!"

Max is spared from being a one-note chaos machine by his observational nature. He actually has a sharp mind and loves commenting on his surroundings in as unpredictable a way as possible. His take on things can make a familiar experience seem new. Max isn't surprised by anything. It's not that he's seen it all before. It's just that he's sees it a little differently than anyone else. For Max, a menacing, cloaked villain looming over him, is more than likely to elicit the response, "Is that a real scar?"

The fact that Max actually has some brains rattling around in that huge skull of his makes him more interesting... and dangerous.

Sam & Max together -- The Freelance Police

Sam will most likely be the point of reference for most viewers. Unless you're lacking a conscience and have the attention span of a housefly, you're probably more like him, even though Max's spontaneity has a definite vicarious appeal. Sam is the guy we are, while Max is the guy we want to be. Sam thinks about what he says, and Max blurts out whatever's on his mind. Sam can be self-conscious, while Max doesn't give a rats pants what anyone thinks. Sam has a sliver of a sense of responsibility, and Max loves blowing the rules out of the water. Sam has some sense of purpose, and Max is along for the dizziest ride he can find.

Sam's purpose is that he really wants to do his part to rid the world of the evil and unlawful. He can take an insignificant event (like a rat running down the street with a stolen ice cream bar) and treat it like a capital offense. For Sam there's not too much difference between the shoplifting of a frozen dairy product or the premeditated hijacking of Ben & Jerry's corporate jet.

Max, on the other hand, is a master at making the importance of a situation shrink away in significance. He enjoys diffusing any emerging trace of seriousness with an off-the cuff response;

Sam: "We have to be subtle, Max. If we somehow alter the fabric of time, we could cease to exist!"

Max: "Ooh, what a grind!"

While Sam & Max's two personalities are very different, there's a wide crossover. Like most best friends who spend a lot of time with each other, Sam & Max share a common language. They enjoy the give and take of their constant observational banter, using words in a way that seems intended to crack each other up. Sam is fond of adding extra modifiers in the course of a conversation;

Sam: He was the biggest, most rank-smelling and poorly-groomed bigfoot I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. This week, anyway.

Max loves razzing Sam for using obscure words or cliched jargon;

Max: I never dreamed I'd live long enough to hear you say "earth parallel development" without laughing, Sam!

Sam & Max maintain a running commentary that to them is commonplace. And usually, at some point, Sam will remind Max what a great time he's having with his favorite catch phrase; "You crack me up little buddy!"

Supporting Characters

The Geek

Sam & Max's Sub-Basement of Solitude is where we find the teenage braniac known to Sam & Max only as The Geek. He's a little taller than Max, has a swooping chunk of disheveled hair, round spectacles and a remarkably cheerful attitude for a guy who, for two years, has been laboring away in a damp cave for next to no pay. The Geek is actually fun to be around since his sense of humor comes out in Sam & Max's



interactions with him. He's a fully socialized, functioning citizen. Or would be if he wasn't so busy. The only thing that makes him a Geek is that he's smart, but he's proud of his title.

An accomplished engineer and computer dynamo, The Geek came to work for the Freelance Police on an intern basis, first helping them straighten out a misguided attempt to

add a drivers-side ejector seat to the DeSoto and then designing and implementing all manner of crimefighting devices and vehicles. Sam & Max are so impressed with his work that they keep thinking of one or two more projects for him to help out on. It hasn't really occurred to them that he might have a home or family somewhere since he accepts each one of their frivolous tasks with genuine enthusiasm.

The Geek is Sam & Max's main information source concerning scientific and technical issues. Using charts and lively demonstrations, he has a great time explaining why something is important or dangerous;

Geek: Once Mack Salmon releases thousands of baby thresher sharks into the public water works, citizens of New York will be shocked and totally wigged out any time they lift up their toilet seats!

Sam: Oh yeah? They should try sharing an apartment with Max.

When Sam & Max arrive in the basement, The Geek is charged up and ready to show the boys how to operate his latest invention. Since Sam & Max are the kind of guys who would try to hook up a power company substation without looking at the instructions, they're already way ahead of The Geek, causing him to take cover. While the Geek is trying to explain proper safety measures for a new hand-held defensive weapon, Sam & Max are busy making the gizmo malfunction, resulting in a spectacular display. Of course that makes it more likely that they'll want to use the gadget in spite of the Geek's protests.

The Geek possesses some of the cautious attitude of the average mother so Sam & Max have a good time playing off of what they think is his overcautiousness. But if Sam & Max end up accidentally singeing all their hair off or getting hopelessly tangled in some mechanical device they'll be certain to come back and say to the Geek, "I don't know why you didn't warn us about that."

Sam & Max are skeptical of technology but at the same time they take advantage of any new developments from the Geek. His inventions will be utilized as long as they're convenient or entertaining but they'll be readily tossed out and ignored as soon as their novelty wears off. For Sam & Max, technology is a mild diversion. To keep them interested, it better be fun.

The Commissioner

The Commissioner is Sam & Max's only real contact with city government. Sam & Max have never laid eyes on this guy but they kind of enjoy the mysterious quality of his phone calls to them. The Commissioner's calls are brief and cryptic.

Sam: "That was the Commissioner, Max! He says there's bad trouble down at the carnival. Let's move!"

Sometimes the call arrives in a more convoluted way.

Sam: "It was somebody claiming to be the Commissioner who sounded exactly like the Commissioner and who I think probably actually *was* the Commissioner. Due to the sensitive nature of the assignment he's sending it over by undercover security blimp!"

A hundred foot blimp drifts past the office window disguised to look like a weiner in a bun.

Max: That immense weiner is keeping me from spotting the blimp, Sam.

Sam: I love ya' Max but you're an idiot. The weiner *is* the blimp!

Max: Hey, not bad!

The twenty-foot high display lights on the weiner blimp begin scrolling the ultra-secret assignment.

The Commissioner's assignments can take on a kind of jacked up "Mission: Impossible" feel.

Sam: He said the case file's taped to the belly of "Jeff" the polar bear down at the Central Park Zoo.

Max: That's a mean polar bear. They almost had to have him put down when he bit the toupee clean off of the keeper!

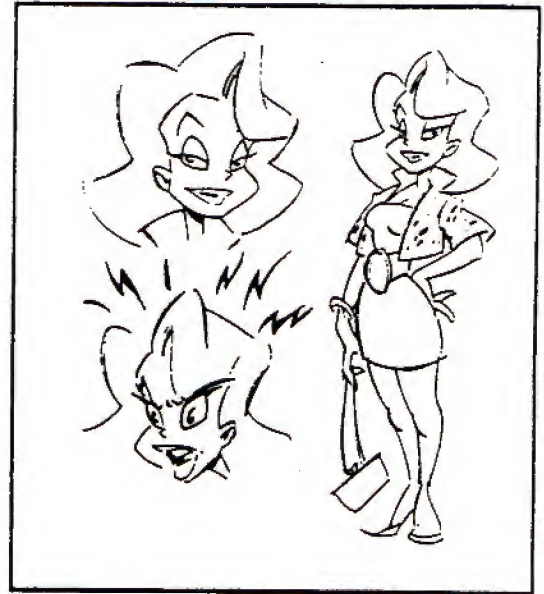
Sam: That's okay, I've got a plan. You wear this lifelike rubber seal get-up and while he's leaning back swallowing you whole, I'll peel the file off his ponderous gut.

Max: You're a brilliant puppy, Sam!

Honey Hatchet'

Honey Hatchet ("the T's are silent, Babe") is Sam & Max's cute, sharp-witted landlady. Honey acquired her last name when she married pro wrestler, The Hatchet, a huge, thick wall of muscle (since turned to indeterminate bulk). The Hatchet bought a few chunks of real estate with his take from the wrestling life. One piece of property was the building where Sam & Max rent their office. To keep her busy and out of trouble (he thinks) Mr. Hatchet has made

Honey the manager of his building which gives her a great excuse to show up unannounced and stick her nose into things.



Honey is by no means a bimbo though she seems to enjoy dressing the part. She's one of the few people who can actually come close to rattling Sam & Max. It's not her looks. Sam & Max are immune to a pretty face. Honey is a strong character and not easily put off by Sam & Max's combined attitude. Sam & Max can make a good show at teasing Honey about her thick husband or the fur jacket she's wearing ("Hey, feels like authentic Dalmatian puppy! Very stylish.") But she'll generally have a response that can momentarily stop the boys in their tracks. (It's synthetic... but I'd consider trading up for rabbit.")

Honey can show up at any time to provide someone for Sam & Max to banter with. They don't necessarily want her hanging around but will occasionally be willing to let her act as receptionist for an afternoon or two. She probably won't stay as busy as they want her to and will end up getting involved in their business. Honey is interested in the work Sam & Max do since it carries an air of adventure. Since she's their landlady they won't just throw her out but will either try to find ways of keeping her

occupied or attempt to scare her off by acting like obnoxious guys which may or may not work.

Sam: Mrs Hatchet! I forgot you were still creeping around back there.

Honey: It's pronounced hashay, babe. And, by the way, I've never creeped in my life.

Max: That's more than I can say. I'm a master creeper. I'm the creepmaster!

Sam (to Honey): Well if you're done filing our mug shots of "violent felons we'd like to see taxidermied", how'd you like to take a crack at our tax forms? We can't make head or tail out of them.

Honey: I think you should take me out on a case! Somewhere there's gotta' be a real crime brewing and I want to be right there in the middle of it. Taking snapshots from a comfortable distance, of course. Hack would be so impressed.

Max: You know, Sam and I were planning on spending the rest of the afternoon playing a loud, annoying game of table hockey. We'll probably have snacks and we'll be chewing with our mouths hanging open. Girls hate that! You better leave now while you have a chance!

Honey: The only thing *women* love more than table hockey, is watching a couple of fellows who really know how to go at it.

Fortunately the phone rings and Sam & Max are out the door. "Whoops! Gotta' go!"

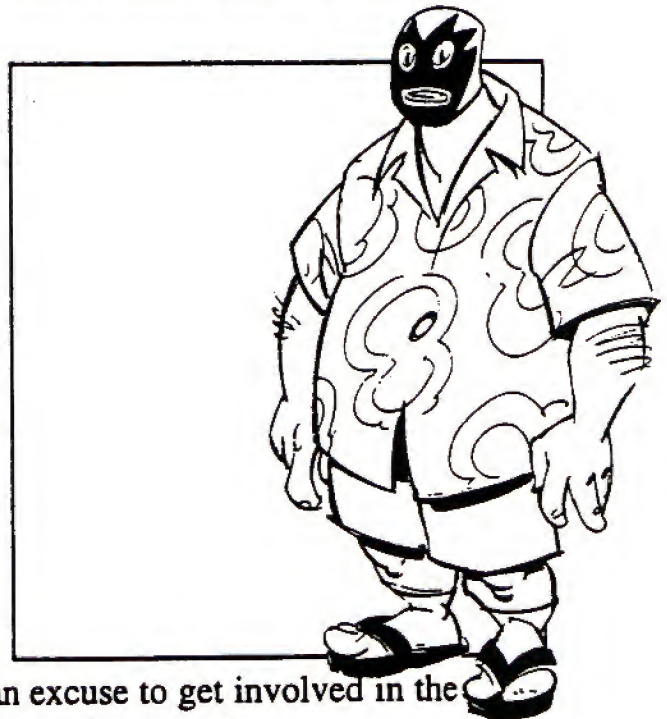
A woman with time on her hands, Honey might occasionally manage to weasel her way along on a case. She's not the type to twist her ankle or complain about a broken fingernail but she does provide her own unique perspective in a situation, which might make her a lively hostage, at some point.

Honey's Hubby, Hack

Honey's guy, Hack Hatchet pronounces his name the way it's written. He was a pro wrestler who made a pretty good living being theatrically pummeled by goons impossibly larger than himself. He also was able to

cash in on sales of rubber action figures created in his image. Hack was forced into retirement by a frequent overpowering THRUM inside of his noggin, the result of a career's worth of headfirst pile drivings into the wrestling mats of America. When the thrum kicks in, Hack needs to be hustled on home as quickly as possible or he might start squeezing nearby objects or passersby into a fine paste. Hack wears a wrestling mask so people won't recognize him on the street but for some reason it has the opposite effect.

A colleague (Rick "the Gila Monster" Broccoli) helped Hack parlay his wrestling dough into some dubious investments including a miniature golf course built on a toxic waste dump and a video game arcade with games that smoke and vibrate with electricity. One of Hack's less dynamic holdings is the Brooklyn building where Sam & Max rent their office. Hack isn't much of a people person and lets his more gregarious wife Honey deal with tenants and collect rent. That gives her an excuse to get involved in the goings on in other people's lives, particularly Sam & Max.



Whatever Honey wants to do is fine with Hack. He'd like to stay home and work on his ceramic dioramas depicting great moments in wrestling history. But since Hack doesn't like spending his money on trivialities like roofers and plumbers he ends up being called in to take care of building maintenance. His handyman philosophy ranges from "Force it!" to "Aw, that's good enough" so the results of Hack's visits are a crapshoot.

Hack is crazy about Honey but if she can find ways to occupy her time he's fine about it. Her intense personality is a bit overwhelming for the big guy. Hack is not completely stupid but somewhat shell-shocked from his former career. He's shy and he gets weary being around people.

Hack: Gotta' get goin' Hon. My head's startin' to thrummmmmmm.

Honey: Uh ohh, Poor baby. I'll take you home, put you to bed and wrap a big bag of frozen peas around your poor skull.

Hack: Thanks, Honey.

Sometimes Hack's thrumming noggin' is the signal that he's ready to get back home where he can cool off and not have to interact with the world.

Rubberpants Commandos

The Rubberpants Commandos (two toddling babies and a gruff, cynical chimp) have a legendary reputation for overkill. The commandos are good guys who are brought in to a situation after careful consideration. They're completely out of control and by comparison make Sam & Max look like sensitive, caring nurturers.

The phrase, "Shall we bring in the Rubberpants Commandos?" would normally be followed by a thoughtful pause, a grimace, a pondering "Hmmmm" followed by "Ahh what the heck! How bad could it get?" The answer usually turns out to be "pretty bad" as the commandos, capable as they are, tend to take a situation at least one step too far. Once they're on the scene, they don't take direction well.

The two toddlers, who speak only in babylike gibberish, are masters at handling a variety of offensive weapons. They giggle and coo gleefully, reacting to the carnage caused by their exaggerated arsenal including a rocket launcher with warheads that disperse a baby fresh powder, leaving evil doers (and anyone else in the room) sneezing and gasping for breath. A shoulder-mounted automatic weapon dispenses repeating blasts of hot, sticky milk. A colorful set of rattling bolo balls trips up escaping perpetrators. During all this sweet-natured carnage the Commandos giggle as if they were kicking down sandcastles at the beach. Their favorite catch phrase is, "Uh, Ohhh!"



Sergeant Blip, the chimp, chews on the stub of a sliced banana and barks orders that are ignored by the two babies. He usually ends up muttering to himself about his dubious career path.

Sometimes the Commandos appear on the scene uninvited and quickly dominate any situation. They are a force of nature and in those situations Sam & Max will step back and let them take over for the moment, reacting as they would to a fireworks display, "Ooh, Ahhh, Yikes!"

The commandos' behavior is pure entertainment for Sam & Max and the reason Sam & Max are willing to step aside is that they know it will all be over way too soon. Sometimes Sam & Max will chat with Sergeant Blip during the melee (since Blip tends to keep to the sidelines). They can relate to the cranky chimp but the babies are purely a source of amusement, and a little tough to warm up to.

Villains:

Mack Salmon



Mack Salmon is the Dr. No of Sam & Max's world. For a lesser vertebrate he is incredibly intelligent. He has money and power, and access to great technological advances, but he'll never get used to his bitter life as a popular seafood dish.

Mack is in a deep state of denial about being a fish. That's why his

fish bowl is mounted like a head atop the shoulders of an artificial gangster body which rides in a futuristic, hovering chair. He thinks of himself as an imposing crime kingpin but he looks so ridiculous he has a hard time getting anyone to be afraid of him, especially Sam & Max;

Sam: "This reminds me, Max. We're completely out of tarter sauce."

It's endlessly frustrating to Mack that the only kind of impression he can seem to make on the Freelance Police is for Max to wonder what Salmon's fake body is made of, or how often he changes his water.

Mack's demeanor is usually just this side of aggravated hysteria. The unfairness of the world is a personal outrage to him. It is Salmon's diabolical plan to level the playing field so that those lucky enough to be small, scrawny, irritable fish guys have the distinct advantage in society. You might hear him say, "Once I melt the polar ice caps, *then* who's gonna' be laughing at the guy with the gills, huh?" which, remarkably enough, is also the plot of *Waterworld*.

Dick Dick

Dick Dick thinks of himself as Sam & Max's main competition, and more than anything they enjoy seeing him humiliated as a reward for his devious nature.

Dick is the ultimate Rent-A-Cop. He is everything Sam & Max are not. Humorless, smug, self absorbed, driven, a lying sack of ballpeen hammers. Sam & Max are his most convenient rivals and he'll do anything in his power to get the best of them.

Like Sam & Max, Dick Dick is sometimes also contracted by the Commissioner. Dick will use these opportunities to try to impress the Commissioner in an effort to make Sam & Max look ineffective by comparison. For Dick, the Commissioner is like a schoolteacher that he's constantly pandering to, with mixed results.

Dick believes strongly in self promotion. He'll make himself known in print ads and late night TV spots. Sam & Max react to his exaggerated claims on TV the way most folks heckle cheap TV ads. Sam & Max might even bump into him in a parking lot distributing flyers for his services. They'll avoid him if they can but a surprise encounter will result in a lively exchange. Dick's not a dumb guy but he's so self-absorbed he sometimes doesn't listen very well. It allows Sam & Max an opportunity to tease the big lug and Dick might not realize he's been razzed until they're already halfway down the street. That irritates him and aggravates his grudge.

Sam: Heyyy! Dickey Boy!

Dick: Don't bug me, Freelance Police. I'm feeling way too good since I tricked the Commish into handing me a plushy new government job.

Max: Oh! So you're the guy specially chosen to crawl through the air conditioning tubes scraping up dried up pigeons that are blocking vital air flow. Good deal!

Sam: You should be proud, Dick. I'm sure you'll bring the job every speck of dignity it deserves.

Max: And don't forget to wash up before you put your fingers in your mouth.

Dick Dick was once a real cop but had his badge taken away when it turned out he was staging crimes that he could solve himself in order to get himself featured on reality based TV cop shows. Dick thought it was too good an idea to waste so it's not out of the question for him to hire some cheap hood to knock over Sal Manella's corner store so Dick himself can step in and make the collar.

For Dick Dick, image is a sales angle. When he's not dressed like Jack Webb, he might deck himself out in some kind of exaggerated phoney baloney cop uniform or as his futuristic crime fighter persona --The Crimson Deltoid! Dick is a prime candidate for major psychiatric attention which hopefully would include experimental brain surgery.



Some Additional Rabble

The Rats

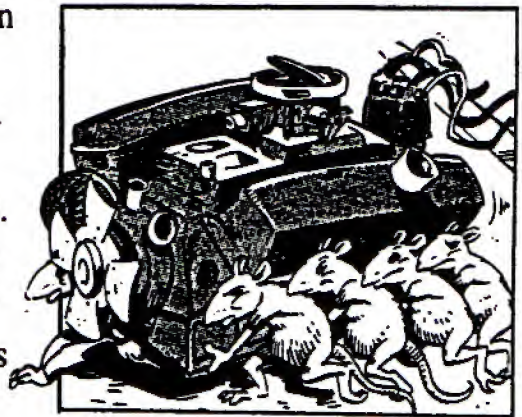


The rats are visual characters playing out their scenes with physical comedy. These scrawny critters are everywhere. Groups of them pull off small time heists. They swipe supplies from local businesses. They hijack Mr. Sticky's ice cream truck, and take off with a rapidly melting bag of ice cream sandwiches. They are the lowest rung of the crime underworld.

They're also incredibly dim. The rats wish they could be hard criminals, feared by one and all. The only problem is that they're too stupid to be genuinely bad.

The rats are a continuing presence in Sam & Max's world. Sometimes they act as background color. They'll be seen in some kind of tableau that parodies human behavior. If we see them involved in a crime, they might be stacked like totem poles so that they can reach the pedals of a stolen bike. Or running along the street carrying a swiped engine block.

Their illegal activity is at such a low level that it could be as simple as trying to swipe a soda pop out of Sam & Max's office cooler. If Max sees the little sneak go in to grab the can, he would probably wedge his foot up against the door, wait a few minutes while he whistles "Frosty the Snowman" and then let the door swing open so the little frozen rat can stagger out, dropping the can and slinking away, foiled.



Max has a special relationship with the rats. For Max, they're like a house of cards that he can't resist kicking over. Max sees their tiny efforts at mischief fascinating and likes watching them go through the motions in pursuit of a goal which Max is always very happy to keep just out of their reach. The rats are not individuals. They're as interchangeable as plastic army men and no matter what, there are always plenty to go around.

Sal Manella The greenest grocer in town

Sal Manella runs the corner grocery store on Sam & Max's block. Sal is a busybody neighbor who thinks he's the source for all neighborhood information at any time of the day or night. He has a nose for what he thinks is suspicious behavior and is always more than willing to pass the info along to anyone within earshot. Sal's a big conspiracy theorist and

would be likely to point out an old lady he's known for years as a possible alien intruder.

Sam & Max have frequent contact with Sal and they've saved his behind a few times from cheap, cheesy hoods trying to clean him out. Sam & Max



often take advantage of their so-called police privilege of not having to pay for anything they pick up at the store. Sam might momentarily question their habit of loading up the trunk of the car with a variety of fluorescent cream snack cakes and frozen burritos without paying, but Max can always rationalize it. Since Sal grudgingly goes along with concept of an open tab, it's hard for Sam & Max to resist.

Locations:

The City

Sam & Max live in New York only because it's the most dangerous sounding name there is for a city. The town looks familiar but is properly exaggerated to accommodate our lovable cartoon lunatics. Passing citizens include giraffe necked women, and tattooed troglodytes. Rats the size of pups heist car stereos. Signage on businesses range from descriptive to obscure; House of Predators, The Velvet Vervet, Hotel Blanket Party. Neighborhood street signs warn, "Hey, stop that!" and "Loitering Zone--Enjoy." On top of an aging brick building a Max-shaped rotating display advertises the home base location of the Freelance Police.

The Office

Sam & Max occupy a modest but impeccably decorated office... well I take that back. Sam & Max's office is a sty. A room that a ten year old boy would feel comfortable in. On shelves, walls and in closets are confiscated artifacts from their adventures, "Say isn't that an authentic Yeti scalp?" "You're darn right! And look at the chunk he took out of me while I was scalping him." In a dim corner, a neglected sandwich has been converted into a high class roach hotel.

Sam's desk dominates the room. It's piled with junk including newspaper clippings about paranormal phenomena and Sam's tiny TV set with the missing antenna replaced by a bent coathanger. The tube is probably tuned to some mentally challenging broadcast. Or more likely something broadcast by the mentally challenged.

Max's desk is the kind they use in a second grade classroom since it's built to his scale. On a nearby wall is a well-used dart board. Maybe one or two darts are poking into it but mostly it's pierced by almost every conceivable kind of sharpened object. In a corner their rubber Bobo the clown punching bag waits to be lovingly slugged.

Reception Area

A small outer reception office is currently vacant. Sam & Max have hired secretaries in the past and certainly won't give up trying to find one that they can't scare off. They've even experimented with animatronics but those come with their own set of problems, "MUST DESTROY SAM & MAX!!!" Currently, a life-sized ventriloquist dummy receptionist occupies the desk while Max operates her hinged mouth from a string through the wall as he greets clients in a disturbing falsetto.

The Pole

In one corner of the office, a brass pole is bolted to the ceiling and disappears into a hole in the floor. In dire emergencies where arrival time is a factor, or any other time somebody wants to slide down a greased pole, Sam & Max use this method of quick departure from their office. Max also greatly enjoys tossing trash down the hole to annoy the neighbors. Speaking of neighbors, since the S&M office is on the third floor, a trip down the pole will give us a look at whatever families or businesses are currently occupying the lower floors. It's not that they don't mind a tremendous dog and rabbit thing hurtling through unannounced, it's just that they can't do much about it.

Sub-basement of Solitude

Using the pole will deposit Sam & Max in their basement garage/lab/batcave. This is also home to the Geek. The Geek is very self-motivated so he won't hesitate to use his computer hacking skills to rustle up enough funding to create a helicopter or jet boat for Sam & Max to properly misuse and then return with the complaint that "It makes a funny noise when I do this!" accompanied by a frightening display of sparks.

A winding passageway will lead Sam & Max to a deep Phantom of the Opera style cove that would allow access by jet boat to a main sewer line and subsequently the local waterways. Max: "It smells like a zoo down here!" Sam: "Hey it's not me!".

The main garage accesses the street, Green Hornet style through some flip-up three dimensional alley tableau. A pile of crates, next to some tipped trash cans all fused onto a movable base will suddenly spring off the street like a murphy bed, taking any unfortunate passing cat or pigeon with it. The car races up a ramp onto the street, surrounded by sparks and tire smoke and of course always observing the posted speed limit. Unless they forget.